



**Sharon Bird MP
Federal Member for Cunningham**

NEWS RELEASE

Repossession of houses increases

Mortgage repossession actions in the NSW Supreme Court have jumped a massive 75-percent since 2004 when the Prime Minister asked Australian families to trust him to keep interest rates low, Federal Member for Cunningham, Sharon Bird, said this evening.

Ms Bird said that the interest rate burden of 4 consecutive increases since 2004 had placed enormous financial pressure on household budgets, which are also experiencing extremely high debt.

“These NSW Supreme Court mortgage repossession figures tell a story about families who simply can’t cope with high interest rates and massive household debt.

“In fact, these latest repossession statistics confirm that the current level of house repossessions is two-thirds higher than in 1991 at the peak of the recession”, Ms Bird said.

She said that the Howard Government was complacent about the interest rate burden on families.

“The high level of household debt means that even a small rise in interest rates swallows up a bigger proportion of the family budget every week and every month”, Ms Bird said.

She said the Prime Minister had in *Question Time* this afternoon responded to the new statistics by stating:

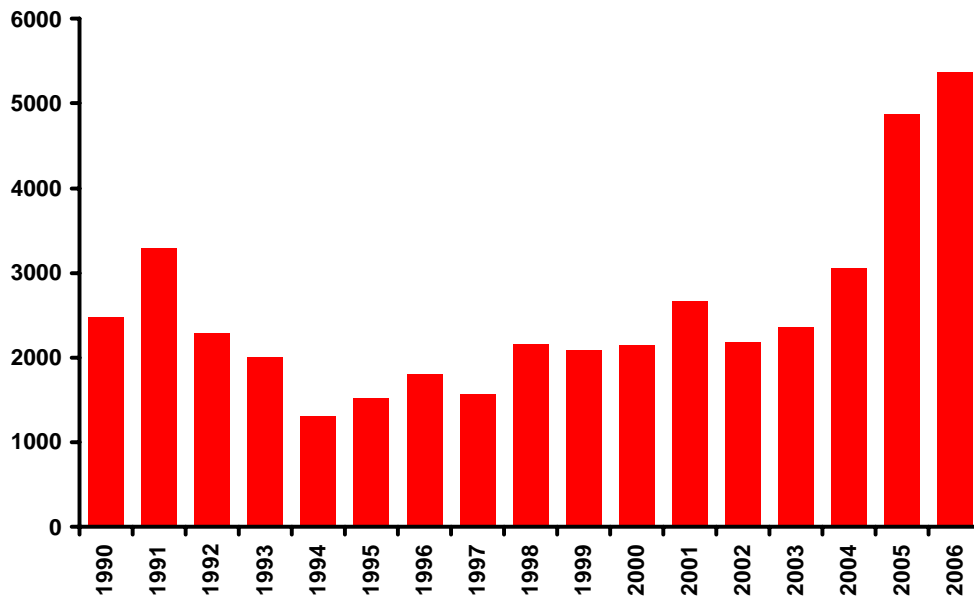
Mr HOWARD— Facts are facts. If there has been an increase in the repossession rate then it has occurred.

Ms Bird said that *Access Economics* has estimated that a 0.25 percent increase in interest rates withdraws approximately \$2 billion in household disposable income from the Australian economy.

February 7, 2007

Attachment:

NSW Supreme Court repossession figures graph



Source: New South Wales Supreme Court